

REMARKS

Pursuant to the Office Action having a mailing date of April 11, 2003, Applicant has amended the present application to put the claims in better condition for allowance. By this amendment, claims 1 and 21 have been cancelled, claims 22 and 23 have been added, and claims 2-20 have been amended. No new matter has been added by this amendment, and support for the new and amended claims may be found throughout the specification and drawings.

The present invention provides a scaffold whereby the installation of a scaffold deck onto an open area of a scaffold frame is made easier due to guide stops disposed along a longitudinal edge of the scaffold deck which cooperate with at least one horizontal frame member to make installing the scaffold decks easier.

35 U.S.C. §112

Claims 1 and 21 have been cancelled, claims 22 and 23 have been added, and claims 2-20 have been amended to put the claims in condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicant believes that the claims embody patentable subject matter and respectfully requests reconsideration of the claims as amended.

35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 9-15 and 17-21 are rejected as being unpatentable over German Patent DE 37 05 566 to Miller in view of Waters, U.S. Patent No. 4,802,553.

The '566 reference discloses scaffold decks 10 having a rectangular shape with two long and two short sides. In this case, however, the long sides are provided with holding means so that the long sides of the decks come into engagement with horizontal carriers of the scaffold frame.

An important feature of the present invention provides the short sides with holding means rather than the long sides as according to the '566 reference. The holding means of Applicant's invention come into engagement with horizontal members adjacent the short sides of the scaffold decks.

Waters illustrates holding means disposed along a short side of a scaffolding deck; however, Waters does not disclose the second horizontal carriers of the scaffold frame nor the guide stops disposed on the long sides of the scaffold deck as according to the present invention.

Applicant submits that the holding means of the scaffold decks of the '566 reference are not equivalent to the guide stops of the present invention because the holding means of the '566 reference are intended for supporting the scaffold deck on a frame member adjacent the long side whereas Applicant's invention provides guide stops along a long side for facilitating the efficient installation of the scaffold decks onto a scaffold frame as according to the claims.

Applicant submits that it would not have been obvious for a person skilled in the art to apply the holding means of Waters to the device shown in the '566 reference as the device of the '566 reference already has holding means on the long sides of the decks so that there is no necessity to provide further holding means on the short sides. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that this be withdrawn as a basis for rejection.

Claims 1-15 and 17-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the '566 reference in view of Waters and Erckhoff.

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the new and amended claims in view of the foregoing remarks relative to the cited references. Applicant submits that the

present invention would not have been obvious in view of these references and respectfully requests that this be withdrawn as a basis for rejection.

Claims 7 and 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the '566 reference in view of Waters, Erckhoff and in further view of Randjelovic.

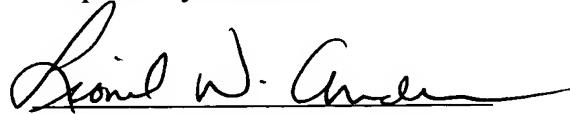
Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the new and amended claims in view of the foregoing arguments relative to the cited references not providing a basis for an obviousness rejection. Applicant submits that the cited references herein do not teach or suggest the claimed invention and as such respectfully requests that this be withdrawn as a basis for rejection.

Claim 16 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over the above cited references in further view of Schworer.

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the claims in view of the foregoing arguments and respectfully requests that this be withdrawn as a basis for rejection.

The claims as amended are now believed to embody patentable subject matter and as such it is respectfully requested that such action be taken.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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